

February 23, 1953

Dear Professor Fringsheim:

Thank you for your letter of February 7. I am gratified that together with your criticism you had some appreciation of the circumstances that might lead to some "few minor defaults" in my review. I could not and do not pretend to be an expert in the numerous fields. It may have been foolhardy to accept the assignment, but it was invited by the editors, and I am not ashamed to display my ignorance.

It is very difficult for an outsider to integrate the conflicting claims in the Euglena work, for it is not easy (as your rebuttal paper mentions) to obtain a clear picture of the controversial issues. Frankly, I could not make much sense out of Lwoff's 1950 paper on the leucoplasts, but do not know whether this is due to my own defects in translation or understanding. For this reason, my resume was entirely too noncommittal. If I ever again subscribe to the folly of a review such as this, I hope I will have the time to go over this material more carefully.

You are not the first to remark on the bringing together of authors' references. It was an unwise attempt at economy, prompted by the pressure from the editors to minimize space.

Concerning the effects of streptomycin, I have had some small experience myself with higher plants (maize, radish) in securing bleached sectors. This is too far out of my own field, but I hope this line of work will be continued by others. Have I misquoted you on the Ternetz' phenomenon? Lwoff, among others, reported and reviewed the result, for which you are cited as having evoked a correct explanation from your own work.

I am not sure why you emphasize the effectiveness of temperature as well as streptomycin treatment in inducing apochlorosis. Is it perhaps by the following reasoning: if temperature induces apochlorosis by hindering the multiplication of the chromatophore, rather than by destroying it, it would be less reasonable to suppose that residual fragments persist and are involved in amylopectin synthesis.

Please be sure that I accept your criticisms with the same good will with which they are offered.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Associate Professor of Genetics